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Using technology creatively to develop students' understanding: Hull College

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Brief description

Hull College uses technology, such as videos and photographs, created by both students and staff to illustrate and demonstrate practical construction skills that students can access anywhere. The college has also developed excellent links with employers and social housing development agencies to enable students to have direct experience of working on housing regeneration schemes.

Overview – the provider's message

The Hull College Group prides itself on the innovative quality of its vocational teaching and learning practice. Staff and students have made a range of films that allow them to develop a high level of professionalism both in problem-solving skills and technical ability.

What makes the teaching and learning in construction unusual is the way in which the staff have used film to develop students' reflections on their level of skill. Students can access examples of task-modelling using their smart phones and mobile devices. The QR codes on pieces of machinery give access to the store of student and staff examples. Because much of the film resource has been created by their peers, students place a high value on these resources. They can review the requirements of the task on their mobile devices at their own pace. Standards are high and, from a sustainable perspective, students are wasting less wood. Female students, captured on film, provide excellent role models for



new students in this traditionally male-dominated environment. We are exceptionally proud of our students' wider learning, reflective practice and high success rates.'

Valerie Maybury - Teaching and e-Learning Manager

The good practice in detail

Staff and learners have **created videos and photographs** to illustrate and demonstrate practical skills in a realistic workplace setting. The students can access these at any time, in any place.

- Recorded activities are available on the college virtual learning environment (VLE) and can be downloaded by students using Quick Response (QR) codes located near relevant work sites.
- Students can then access them on their own mobile devices at any time. Specialist staff also use technology creatively to deliver functional skills embedded in both vocational and lifestyle scenarios making them more accessible, understandable and relevant for students.

The college has also developed **excellent links with employers and social housing development agencies** to enable students gain real work experience working on housing regeneration schemes in Hull. As well as valuable work experience for the students, social housing development enhances community cohesion and eases access to much needed social housing stock.

Linking the understanding of theory with sustained practice

Good-quality visual resources created by both staff and students

The construction crafts department introduced the process of filming key activities so that students could use it as a resource through the college virtual learning environment (VLE). This enables the students to link their theoretical understanding with practical skills. The students who participate in filming activities benefit in more ways than just demonstrating their vocational skills.

- It enhances their understanding and use of information technology.
- Their levels of confidence increases in carrying out specific skills, such as making a dove-tail joint, to the required standard.
- They can also use these resources on a personal level by taking them to job interviews to show prospective employers their skills.
- Using the technology motivates all of the students and helps to keep them involved in their learning.



The process also successfully challenges gender stereotyping in construction crafts by showcasing good skills of female students on the programme. The college uses this very effectively to encourage females into construction. A well-supported 'Women into Trades' group also works to promote construction crafts among females.

Creative use of mobile technologies to access resources

The college realised that it would make the resources even more accessible if students could use them through their own personal mobile devices.

- They developed a large number of [Quick Response bar codes](#) linked to the range of visual resources
- They promoted these at key locations around their very spacious and well-designed workshop areas.



- Staff have [taught students](#) how to download a free 'app' that lets them scan the QR and download the resource to their own device.
- For students who do not own a mobile device, the college provides tablets for use in workshops.
- Students have good access at a wide range of times and places, such as on the bus on the way into college and during evenings and at weekends.

The college carefully monitors access and usage.

This QR code is the one that takes you to a student:

Laying floor coverings



And this one takes you to.... *Fitting Skirting Board* on Youtube



How this activity has influenced other curriculum areas

Once the process got underway in construction crafts, the word soon spread and other curriculum areas started getting involved. Excellent collaboration and support between the departments allowed similar activities to develop in:

- Electrical installation: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAI_LK1RtjE
- Motor vehicle: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqFxAncwEaE>
- Hair and beauty: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFIL6S4MMNY>
- Catering: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ig5j-Uinakk>

The college also recognised other opportunities. For example, for the video about changing a wheel, a performing arts student was brought in to do the 'voice over'. She has been able to use this for evidence for her own course work as well as support in interview situations.



Students recognise key benefits, such as:

- easy access to visual support where and when they need
- not always needing to ask the tutor for help; they recognise how this develops their independent learning skills.

Commitment to the two-way street

Students' excellent links with employers and social housing development agencies

Hull College has developed excellent links with a number of employers and social housing development agencies. Students and staff from a range of vocational areas make good use of these to provide a range of benefits including:



- real work-experience on a real construction site
- team work development
- construction protocols such first and second fix



- contributing to local communities by developing derelict housing
- increasing the availability and standard of housing stock
- making direct links with potential employers
- opportunities for staff to update and refresh current practice
- impact on social cohesion for the communities where these properties are situated



Provider background



[The Hull College Group](#) incorporates Hull College, Harrogate College, Goole College and Rhino Training Company. The group offers a wide variety of further and higher education courses including A levels, BTECs, NVQs, foundation degrees, BA Hons degrees and Masters' degrees. They also offer apprenticeship and higher apprenticeship programmes. The college offers provision to over 1,000 students 14 to 16 years' old, including full and part-time provision. Adults make up 76% of the part-time students and 38% of the full-time students.

Background

It's about work... the summary report of the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning (CAVTL) highlighted characteristics and features of outstanding vocational teaching, learning and assessment. These are in line with the criteria for judging the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Ofsted's [Common Inspection Framework for FE and skills 2012](#), but also focus on the additional, distinctive processes of design and delivery which characterise excellent vocational provision.

The case studies in this set were compiled in response to the CAVTL report which highlighted the importance of ensuring a 'clear line of sight to work' on vocational programmes.

[The Education Training Foundation](#) has been asked to take forward the recommendations from the Commission's report.

Other examples in this set

Barking and Dagenham (employability): www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140003

Barking and Dagenham (motorsport): www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140004

Bridgwater College: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140005

Exeter College: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130259

Foxes Academy: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140006

Leeds City College: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140007

People and Business Development Ltd: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140009

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust:
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140008

Wendy Shorter Interiors: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140010

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Get in touch [here](#).

To view other good practice examples, go to:
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/goodpractice